THE PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL

[ESTABLISHED IN 1865.]

Devoted to Spiritual Philosophy and Phenomena.

TRUTH WEARS NO MASK, BOWS AT NO HUMAN SHRINE, SEEKS NEITHER PLACE NOR APPLAUSE: SHE ONLY ASKS A HEARING.

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Spiritualism—The Rap Heard Round the World.

SERMON BY REV. SOLON LAUER.

All liberal thinkers must be interested in a movement which makes so stupendous a claim as that of an open communion between this world and the next. Forty-nine years ago the rappings at Hydesville and Rochester, N. Y., attracted the attention of the world. Explanations ensued, scoffings, persecutions, revilings, and then the people began to believe. They have gone on believing, until to-day Spiritualism numbers its followers by the millions, in all quarters of the civilized world. The movement has scores of papers, and has published millions of books and pamphlets. Among its believers and advocates are numbered scores of the world's best known names—names of men and women eminent in art, science and letters. A movement of this extent, then, whatever its doctrine or practices, must command our attention. If it be wrong, we should investigate and expose it. If it be true, we should know the fact, and willingly admit it.

There are three general objections to a consideration of the claims of Spiritualism. There are those who object to Spiritualism because it conflicts with their religious beliefs; there are others who object because of its ill-odored associations; and still others who, with no serious investigation, pronounce the whole thing trickery and delusion.

As Unitarians and liberal thinkers, we are supposed to have no theological prejudices against any form of teaching. The first question with us is, Is it true? Is it a fact scientifically demonstrated? If it is, we will attend to its theological implications later. The fact is, whether the central claim of spirit communication is true or not, there is nothing in the teachings of the better class of Spiritualists inconsistent with the general body of Unitarian doctrine. If I had the time this morning I could match all the leading religious teachings of Spiritualism with passages from the sermons of Channing and Parker. There have been doctrines taught by individual speakers and writers among Spiritualists which most of us Unitarians would repudiate; but these are also repudiated by the great mass of Spiritualists themselves. When we set out to form an estimate of a public movement, we must not judge it by its worst side alone, nor by its best alone; but by the general consensus of its teaching.

Aside from its central claim of spirit communion, Spiritualism teaches very little that any truly liberal mind would object to. Orthodox believers, as a rule, object to Spiritualism on the same grounds on which they object to Unitarianism; namely, that it denies the literal doctrines of the deity of Jesus Christ, the infallible inspiration and authority of the Bible, and the eternity of future punishment. As far as the central claim of spirit communion is concerned, it has been believed by thousands of orthodox Christians in the past, and might be accepted by orthodox Christians of the present without any prejudice to their creeds. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, believed in it; Adam Clarke, the celebrated Bible commentator, believed in it, and some of the best preachers in the orthodox ranks to-day believe in it.

As to the ill-odored associations to which so many people object, we can only say that questions of fact should be decided by scientific evidence, and not by the moral character of those who believe. A movement like Spiritualism, free from the restraints of organized authority, offering a refuge to all who wish to enter its ranks, placing a high premium upon occult phenomena, must inevitably attract many dissolute characters, many cranks of all sorts, many social parasites whose only interest in the movement is the benefit they can derive from gullible followers. Every new movement which sets its face against conventional beliefs and customs, is cursed by some followers whose actions and teachings bring reproach upon it in the public estimation. Even primitive Christianity had its share of such. Disloyal Peter Denied his master, traitorous Judas betrayed him for silver, unworthy disciples turned the communion table into a Bacchanalian orgy, and other sins reproved by Paul in his letters, show us that the high teachings of Jesus were slow in making their way into the daily life of the disciples.

As the movement of Spiritualism advances, it will doubtless gradually free itself from many of

these objectionable features, through a closer organization and a more rigid scrutiny of the character of those who desire to be admitted to its fellowship as teachers and advocates.

We can readily understand how the unceasing demand for phenomena, and the careless and unscientific methods which prevail in most seances and on public platforms, should attract a following of frauds and tricksters who prey upon the gullible and make an easy living by tricks of legerdemain. When every Spiritualist Society shall have its committee, composed of keen, conservative, well-trained men, to examine the claims of every medium who seeks admission to the platform, there will be a thinning out in the ranks of the frauds that now infest the movement, and the resulting phenomena will better command the attention and respect of the public.

Organization is the necessary condition of success in any movement. Spiritualists in the past have been very unwilling to organize, lest they should thereby become crystallized and orthodox; and their societies have therefore been the prey of all manner of frauds and tricksters. The result has been that very little progress has been made through public phenomena toward a solution of the problems involved. A movement has been for some time on foot to perfect an organization, and the outlook for the future is much better. The prospect now is that the Augean stables will be cleansed, and that the Hercules of reform, with his club and lion's skin, will sally forth to slay some of the monsters that infest the realm of Spiritualism.

The third objection, namely, that the phenomena of Spiritualism are the result of trickery and delusion, is the one to which we must give the most attention. Among liberal thinkers the incidental teachings of Spiritualism are of secondary importance to this claim of open communion with the so-called dead. We, as Unitarians, need waste no time in removing the current theological objections to Spiritualism. Those of us who place truth above all considerations of social popularity will feel no hesitation in examining the claims of Spiritualism merely because these are not popular with the 400. In fact, many of the 400 already believe in Spiritualism, but are afraid to confess it. Now, the main question with us, as a body of liberal thinkers, to whom truth is the most sacred thing in the world, and worth any sacrifice, is, "Are these phenomena facts; and, if so, what is their true explanation?"

My estimate of the importance of this question cannot possibly be overstated. I consider the answering of this question the most important duty that confronts us in the field of religious enquiry. The time has gone by for any hypersensitiveness in dealing with the question of human immortality. Men and women to-day are thinking as they have never done before. With all respect to sacred traditions, with all due deference to the religious teachings of the past, we still demand that truth for us shall be established upon living evidence. We have hoped for a future life, we have fondly cherished this hope in the face of bereavement, we have nurtured it with the tradition of the resurrection of Jesus from the tomb, but in spite of ourselves our intellects demand that so important a doctrine as human immortality shall be builded upon a foundation of facts.

We are therefore compelled, even against our desire, to approach this problem of immortality not in the spirit of faith, or of sentiment, but in the spirit of scientific enquiry.

The doctrine of human immortality, which religion has heretofore claimed for its own, has, for all advanced thinkers, been taken from the realm of theological disputation and placed in that of scientific enquiry. The problem of immortality to-day belongs to the domain of experimental psychology. It is to be solved, if at all, by an examination of the phenomena of mind, in all of their newly-discovered and to-be-discovered aspects.

I need not say that the more serious and earnest student will not meet with desired success in the seance room of the average medium, nor at the average public exhibition. Those who go to such places may find much to astonish, much to perplex the mind; but it is rare indeed that any satisfactory solution is reached through such investigations. Nor will immediate success attend an effort to reach results through private seances, under the control of the investigator. In the first place, those who deal in spurious phenomena have learned their tricks so well that they are usually able to deceive even the elect. I might give some illustrations of this statement did time permit. In the second place, the possibilities of thought-transference, mind-reading, intuition, hypnotic suggestion, and other elements of the embodied mind, are so great, and so imperfectly understood, that a long and studious preparation is necessary, before any one can approximately estimate the true value of phenomenal evidence. Without casting any reproach on the popular exhibitions of occult phenomena with which most of us are more or less familiar; without indeed denying that all these have their influence in awaking curiosity and stimulating earnest minds to a deeper investigation, we must confess that for a scientific solution of these mysteries most of us would do well to study the published works of those earnest and well-trained minds who have devoted years to the study of occult phenomena.

The London Society for Psychical Research has in its Proceedings given us a mass of scientific evidence which vastly outweighs the whole body of publications popularly known as Spiritualistic, and which will be far more useful to us in reaching solid conclusions than any investigations which we should be likely to carry on independently.

Does the literature of the Psychical Society sustain the claim of spirit communications? As a whole, it does not. There are members of the Society who have accepted the Spiritualistic hypothesis as the only rational solution of a portion of these occult phenomena, but there are others who are still in doubt. The fact is, that while there are thousands of incompetent persons who either deny or accept the claim of spirit communication, and whose assertions either way are worth nothing, there are solid, earnest, studious

minds investigating these phenomena, some of whom accept and others of whom still hesitate to accept the Spiritualistic theory. It may be said that all who have given the matter earnest, unbiased attention, are convinced; but this is not strictly true. It may be also said that those who, after extended investigations, refuse to believe, are of such a materialistic temperament that the evidence in their minds is biased. But this is not quite fair treatment.

The essential claim of Spiritualism is that the doctrine of spirit communion is now demonstrated by actual physical evidence, which appeals to the senses, and leaves nothing for the spiritual nature of man to perform in the way of faith. If this is true, all types of mind, spiritual and materialistic alike, must perceive it upon confronting the evidence. The fact is, that while great progress has been made toward a scientific demonstration of the claim of spirit communion, it has not yet (for all minds) reached that stage of demonstration to which other facts of nature have attained.

Recognizing, then, the tentative character of most explanations in this field of psychical research, we should avoid all dogmatism, all prejudice, and patiently wait for "light, more light."

None of us can be indifferent to the outcome of this immense problem. Our dearest hopes are entwined with it. I dare not say that I occupy an attitude of cold, scientific indifference as to the outcome of this study. We all want the truth, and we all hope that we are brave enough to accept it, whatever it may be; but I fear that most of us relish the truth a little better when it comes in accordance with our expectations. As for myself, if I may be pardoned for confessing my own attitude toward this question, I must say that there seems to me no hope for a general scientific demonstration of the future life for man outside the line of these investigations. If we are immortal, if the soul survives the death of the body, there ought to be some scientific means of demonstrating the fact. If not, this would be the only fact in all nature not susceptible of actual demonstration. I must confess that in spite of my own perplexities, when confronted with these mysterious phenomena, and the many conflicting theories concerning them; in spite of the uncertain state of psychical research in general among the more serious students; in spite of all doubts and fears, I cling with absolute faith to the possibility of a scientific demonstration, along these lines, of the deep problem of human immortality.

Meantime, while we are waiting for that perfect evidence which shall overwhelm all doubt and opposition, and place the doctrine of a future life on a plane with the universally-accepted facts of science, let us not dogmatize nor condemn. As for myself, though I am far from admitting all the claims of Spiritualism; though I perceive that many of the phenomena commonly attributed to spirits are explainable by theories which involve no occult agency beyond the subjective or subliminal mind of man; yet I am compelled to confess that for some of the recorded phenomena I can find no theory more satisfactory than that of spirit agency. I do not say that to my mind this theory is free from all objections; I do not say that it may not give place to another theory, through further investigation; but with respect to certain phenomena it seems to me at present more rational, and less objectionable, than any yet offered. It certainly accords with our deepest and tenderest sentiments, and with our highest and purest hopes. Once let this theory be demonstrated to the satisfaction of all thinking minds, and what a flood of light would be poured into the darkness of this world! How would death be robbed of its sting and the grave of its victory! Then indeed might we chant, in the sublime language of the Canticle, "Cease, gross darkness of the earth, where the righteous put forth their hands, and fear! The veil between is taken away, and the mingling day-spring comes! * * * Thou hast made one family, there and here; one living communion of seen and unseen!"

LET US JOYFULLY GREET THEM.

AIR:—"Marching Through Georgia."

Friends who here in mortal pine for those who've gone before
Ever keep in memory green the tho'ts and deeds of yore,
For those who've long been waiting on that bright and happy shore
Bid us to joyfully greet them.

CHORUS:

All hail! all hail! the gladsome better way;
All hail! all hail! to those in bright array
Who've come to bring us tidings from the land so far away—
O, let us joyfully greet them.

We know that to us angels come from glory lands on high,
And bid us be prepared for the world of By-and-By,
Where we'll live in joy forever in our home beyond the sky:
Yes, we will joyfully greet them.—[Cho.]

So let us live ennobled by our contact with the world,
And to our foes give only good for the evil at us hurled,
For we're marching on to victory, our banners are unfurled.
Yes, we will joyfully greet them.—[Cho.]

Ney, Ohio. U. G. FIGLEY.

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

In a sense all men of all ages are alike, and in another sense they are different, yet to the average man there does not seem to be any difference either in character or life. It is only as we look at the individual and attempt to solve the problems of his inner life that we find that the types of character are not fixed and immutable, but variable and progressive. Some characteristics of human life survive from age to age while others pass away, yet each age witnesses an advance even in that which it holds in common with past ages, the same and yet different. As one discerns these diversities and is able to recognize the composite outline of the whole, he discerns or apprehends what the Spirit of the Age Is.

It is not a person, a type of character, a fixed unchangable line of progression, or form of human life, but, a combination of all forms of progression that, of itself, *creates* an attitude of mind, a temperament, a Spirit of the Age.

The characteristics of the Spirit of this Age are, restless criticism, severe analysis and unquestioned doubt, yet without bitterness or frivolity.

Its questionings are upon the most vital truths

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THOMAS G. NEWMAN,
EDITOR,

Assisted by an Able Corps of Special Contributors.

☞ All communications for the Editorial, Literary, or the News Columns should be addressed to EDITOR OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, Sta. B, San Francisco, California.

☞ No notice can be taken of anonymous communications. Whatever is intended for insertion must be authenticated by name and address of the writer—not necessarily for publication, but as a guaranty of faith.

☞ The Editor is not responsible for any opinions expressed in the communications of correspondents.

☞ Any Newspapers sent to this office containing matter for inspection, should be marked by a line drawn around the article or articles in question.

☞ Rejected Communications will be returned only when stamps for that purpose, accompany them. They will not be preserved more than 30 days, after being received at this office.

APRIL 29, 1897.

The Sublime Present.

We think of the passing century as the most wonderful age of the world, and so it is, and has been. The inventions and accomplishments in the scientific world have been thoroughly astonishing. But we are doubtless on the eve of yet grander achievements and mightier inventions than any the world has yet witnessed.

It is now just announced that the latest disclosures in electrical science show that telegraphy without wires is an accomplished fact. With the sanction and aid of the British postal department and the assistance of the chief of the electrical division, an Italian inventor has been experimenting in this direction, and has demonstrated its practicability. Guglielmo Marconi (for that is this inventor's name) has discovered a wave energy that can penetrate anything and is non-refractible. He has by the use of the Hertzian waves and by a series of impulses, set up in his apparatus, affected a receiver placed on the further side of a mile of earth and rock.

While no details of the methods or the machinery by which it has been accomplished, has been made public, yet we learn much about this marvelous discovery from the *Scientific American*, which says:

It is believed that this system of telegraphy and signaling has capabilities within it that will astonish the world. Certainly the limit of knowledge in this direction has not been reached. The question is, What may we expect? Will this form of energy assist in accomplishing the much-discussed transference of thought or telepathy? Will it enable a person at one point on the globe to communicate with another on the opposite? Can this energy be utilized in communicating with other worlds?

To telegraph through a mile of earth without a wire connection, may well lead us to enquire, What Next? It is but a twin discovery to telepathy. Thought transference has been accomplished already, when not only "a mile of earth" was between the persons communicating—but whole Oceans and Continents!

The spirit world is full of this energy or power! We set our minds on the spirit of a friend, and he is present, and with proper conditions, can communicate with us. That is a quality of spirit. Time and space are annihilated. We are just as really, here and now, spirits, as we shall be in the sweet bye-and-bye, and when we know and realize our powers (like the young bird which for the first time finds out the power of its wings) we, too, can converse with our friends, even though hills and mountains, oceans and continents may be between us. All we need is to ascertain our powers, and how to use them, so as to realize to the fullest extent, our capabilities and the grand possibilities of our existence.

Yes, the *Scientific American* may rest assured that this energy will yet be "utilized in our communicating with other worlds"—for all nature is a unit, and man is the masterpiece of creation, with god-like powers yet untried.

The Syncronograph.

Another triumph of science in these days is this instrument which its inventors emphatically declare will revolutionize telegraphy, sending 3000 words per minute over a single wire. A duplex wire will carry 6000 words a minute.

On April 21, before the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Prof. Albert Crehore, of Dartsmouth College described a new method of very rapid telegraphing by use of alternating currents, which will be developed by him and Lieut. George Owen Squier of the United States Army. The experiments which resulted in the development of the new system were made at the United States Artillery School, Ft. Monroe, Va.

The average telegraph operator, sending messages by the Morse system, can transmit from 30 to 40 words per minute. By the Wheatstone system, where messages are first prepared on a puncher-strip and then transmitted automatically, a speed of from 150 to 200 words per minute may be attained. The new system promises a speed of 3000 words per minute over a single wire.

At the same time the wire could be used for sending other messages by the ordinary Morse system, or by the quadruple system, without creating any interference.

It is also possible to send two entirely different messages over the same line at the same time, at the rate of 3000 words per minute, and in addition these messages could be transmitted to and received by any number of stations at the same instant and recorded automatically. It is necessary to have the messages prepared for sending, on slips of paper, punched with signals to represent letters, in accordance with the European modification of the Morse code.

The general method by which this wonderful speed is to be accomplished is by taking advantage of the peculiarity of alternating currents, in which currents of opposite polarity succeed each other with a rapidity varying from 250 to 400 per second. Between each pair of these waves of current is a moment when the wire is neutral.

By means of a simple device these currents may be interrupted, and one or more wave movements of current omitted. By noting these interruptions and their order, messages can be read by the use of a sensitive needle or flashlight.

Occultism in Sweden.

In Sweden the Theosophical movement is growing. They now have a monthly publication—*The Theosophia*. W. Q. Judge has an address in the March number on the "Closing Cycle," which was read at a social gathering, convened to celebrate the 9th anniversary of the founding of the Theosophical Society in Sweden. A new branch (the 10th) has been formed in Dalecarlia, one of the oldest and most interesting provinces, whose inhabitants have preserved not only the language (quite distinct from

the Swedish, more resembling the Icelandish) but also many other characteristics of the Scandinavians. They are mostly small land-owners, a free and independent peasantry, tilling their own lands and living a simple and healthy life amidst their mountains, forests and lakes. A man of their own ranks has taken the initiative and been elected president of the new branch.

Spiritualism, Theosophy and other societies for occult investigation are gaining ground in old Europe. The persecuting crushing power of orthodoxy is releasing its hold on the thoughtful, and as its influence diminishes, investigation increases, and scientific advancement is made possible. The day of the dogmatic religionist is nearly over. Light has come, and knowledge increases.

The Odor of Flowers.

Why are flowers less odorous in the Orient than in the Occident — is answered by M. Eugene Mesnard of the High School of Science at Rouen as follows: "Light and not oxygen, is the chief cause of the transformations and destruction of perfumes: but in many cases both of these agents seem to unite their efforts. The action of light makes itself felt in two different manners: on one hand, it acts as a chemical force, capable of furnishing energy to all the transformations through which odorous products pass, from their elaboration to their total resinification; on the other hand, it exerts a mechanical action that plays an important part in the general biology of the plants, and this property explains the manner of emission of perfume by flowers. The intensity of the perfume of a flower depends on the equilibrium that is established at every hour in the day between the pressure of the water in the cells, which tends to expel outward the perfumes contained in the plant skin, and the action of light, which opposes this effort." M. Mesnard says the whole physiology of odoriferous plants depends on this principle. In the Orient there is too much light and too little water.

The Spring of the Year.

Spring-time has come again—the time for the singing of birds, for the blooming of flowers, and the budding of fruit trees. All are quickened again. It is a resurrection to a new life. In fact, nothing in material nature is quickened except it die. Mortality is the basic state of immortality. The natural body is the forerunner of the spiritual body. Echoes of eternal truth awakens at this thought, on every side. Spring paints it, in illuminated text of leaf and flower, on every hillside. The orb of day blazes upon it. The experience by which we find truth reveals it. Every passing day is ringing gladly with it. The mystery of every life flashes through the future with it. Fruitage succeeds the flower, like as the spirit world succeeds the material world. The full fruition and glory of our heavenly home is the result of the budding, blossoming Spring-time of our material existence.

Excavations in Upper Syria, at Sendjirli, have yielded some valuable returns. One of the oldest inscriptions found is written on a robe of a statue of the god Hadad, and is dated by scholars about 3000 years ago. In it King Panammou I. adjures his descendants to offer a special libation, at the moment of their coronation, over and above the usual sacrifices in honor of the god Hadad. "When my name has been pronounced and the formula recited, viz., 'The soul of Panammou: may it drink with thee,' then the soul of Panammou will drink with thee. But he who shall neglect this ceremony shall see his sacrifice rejected by Hadad, and the soul of Panammou will drink with Hadad alone." It has been maintained by some that the ancient Syrians believed in the immortality of the soul, and this seems to prove it.

Secretaries of societies are requested to order copies of the JOURNAL to place on sale at their meetings, with other Spiritualist papers, and are authorized to receive subscriptions for the JOURNAL. Brief reports of anything of interest are solicited in every locality.

Alabaster Box.—Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed until your friends have passed beyond this mortal life, says an Exchange. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving, cheering words while their ears can hear them, and while their hearts can be thrilled and made happier by them. The kind things you mean to say when they are gone, say before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their coffins, send to brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them. I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without an eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. Let us learn to annoint our friends beforehand for their burial. Postmortem kindness does not cheer the burdened spirit—flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward over the weary way.

We Obtain more new subscribers through the kind efforts of our readers than from any other source. The reason is because they know the value of the JOURNAL and its aid in unfolding the truths of Spiritualism, and in preparing the mind to receive them. We therefore request those who do not keep a file of the JOURNAL, to mark articles which seem to be appropriate, and then mail them to friends, to do missionary work.

The Dawn, is the name of a new monthly magazine devoted to "religion, philosophy and science," published at Calcutta, India, at $2 a year. No. 1 is now on our desk, and contains 32 pages. It is proposed in it to make a special study of Hindu life, thought and faith, in a spirit of appreciation, while remaining fully alive to the usefulness and the necessity of the existence of all other systems, secular or religious, Eastern or Western.

In South Africa, Spiritualism is making headway. James White, of Kimberley, says that the society there has a reading room and hall, and holds four regular meetings each week. They are getting physical manifestations and there is much interest manifested.

State the address from which it is desired to change, as well as the one to which the JOURNAL is in future to be sent. We can find it in no other way, as there are often several persons on our list of the same name. It is a good plan to enclose the old wrapper label, to make sure of correctness.

☞ The gifted editress of the *Humanitarian*, Victoria Woodhull Martin, was widowed on March 20, by the death of John Biddulph Martin, Esq., banker, statistian and philanthropist.

Half-Price Book List on page 271.

Electric Light without a dynamo is a new discovery which will create a sensation in electrical circles and yield a fortune to the discoverea and inventor. Mr. Magner has, by a careful study of over two years, discovered a method by which he is able to produce an arc light by the use of a simple battery. His apparatus was in working order for three days in the laboratory at his residence in Mill Valley, Cal., last week.

This invention will be of great value, for Mr. Magner says that a six-roomed house can be lighted for about $1 a month by this method, and the mixture can be sold around the streets as milk is now delivered from house to house. It will be served in rubber pails.

Masloth, the old astrologer, has written a horoscope for the editor of the JOURNAL which proves to be very interesting and accurate. The past being so correctly described, in particulars which are not known by anyone on the Pacific Coast, gives every confidence in the events announced for the future. See advertisement on page 266.

☞ The St Louis *Spiritual Medium*, one of the four new periodicals lately started, has suspended for want of sufficient patronage. It was a good paper and in ordinary times might have lived, but amid present financial troubles could not reasonably expect sufficient support. We are sorry for the loss to its projectors, but they could expect nothing else. Some others will have to follow suit.

Occult Science.—The Leadville, Colo., *Reporter* contains the following:

Reading mines by occult science, following the ore-vein through hundreds of feet of solid earth, telling the quantity and quality of the ore body, the number, size and location of each pocket to be encountered: in short, directing the work from a plat and telling the owner what to expect, seems almost impossible. Dr. G. C. Beckwith-Ewell, a medium, doing missionary work in this city for the State Association, reads a mine by taking in his hand a piece of ore from it. It is not necessary for him to be on the ground. He has told the kind of ore the mine carries, described the workings, directed development to ore bodies, etc.

M. S. Beckwith, president of the Association at St. Louis, Mo., passed to the higher life on April 7, aged 70 years. He was universally loved.

Spiritualist News.

☞ In this department may be found the cream of the current Spiritualist news of the day, culled from every available source.

The Editor must not be held responsible for the opinions expressed, nor for the estimated talent or reputation of the persons mentioned.

Readers are requested to send us short items of news. Interesting incidents of spirit communion and well authenticated spirit phenomena are ever welcome, and will be published as soon as possible

Table-tipping parties are now fashionable in Paris, since the great play of Sardou.

The Ohio State Convention will be held on May 4, at Columbus, O., to organize a State Association.

Moses Hull is leading the people of Lima, O., out of creedal superstition and ignorance to the high lands of spiritual truth.

Mrs. M. L. Chandler, for a short time only, gives readings and lessons in Palmistry, daily, from 10 a. m., to 5 p. m., at 323 Geary street, San Francisco.

Mr. M. E. Morse of 335 11th Ave., has founded the Brotherhood of the Co-operative Commonwealth, which will meet every Sunday at 2 p. m., at 418 McAllister street, San Francisco.

Mrs. Maude L. Freitag has returned to San Francisco, and gave wonderful ballot tests to a large audience at Scottish Hall, last Sunday evening, to the comfort and satisfaction of all present. She will during May give tests every Sunday evening at the same place.

Dr. M. Muehlenbruch's meetings at Gier Hall, 511 14th street, Oakland, every Sunday evening, are drawing together fine audiences of investigators. The doctor's psychometric readings and tests are very convincing, and are doing much towards building up the Cause there.

A special meeting of the Board of Directors of the California State Spiritualists' Association is called for Thursday, April 29, at 2096 Market street, San Francisco. All those having matters to bring before the Board should file them with the secretary before that date.

The New York State Association was organized on April 14, 1897, at Syracuse, N. Y. Frank Walker, president; Mrs. Tillie U. Reynolds, secretary, Troy, N. Y. Dr. E. Butterfield, Syracuse, N. Y., the noted clairvoyant physician, did noble work in making necessary arrangements for the convention.

A beautiful spiritual wedding took place at the Pettis Hall, Seattle, Wash., on April 12th. Samuel F. Thompson and Laura D. Horne were married by the pastor of the Spiritual Society, Mrs. E. Thomas. This being the first spiritual wedding on Puget Sound, there was a large attendance of witnesses.

Rev. Geo. W. Carpender, M. D., ex-president of the First Spiritual Society of Los Angeles, Cal., is coming to San Francisco, and will be pleased to correspond with societies in this vicinity in reference to platform work. He is an excellent inspirational lecturer and his address will be 1025 Harrison street, San Francisco.

The People's Spiritual Society held their weekly meeting last Wednesday at 111 Larkin street, San Francisco, when Mrs. Hendee-Rogers drew attention to the lack of co-operation among the various societies to meet and defeat opposition. Mrs. Lillie, in her usual able manner, dealt with the question, "What was the Original Sin?" and showed that the orthodoz interpretation of scripture was incompatible with modern ideas and evidence of so-called sin. Mrs. Lillie will speak again on the 28th. Mrs. Wrenn, Mrs. Hendee-Rogers and Mrs. I. Robinson gave several tests and readings. Music was supplied by Mrs. Winters and Mrs. Rice.

The members of the First Spiritual Ladies' Aid Society are harmoniously working together for the good of humanity. Their headquarters are at 418 McAllister street, San Francisco, where they hold meetings every Friday evening. On the first three Fridays the business meetings begin at 7 p. m., after which tests are given by prominent mediums. On the last Friday evening in the month they hold a social entertainment and dance. The ladies extend a cordial invitation to all interested in charitable work, and ask for co-operation and assistance of money or discarded clothing with which they can in turn assist those in need. The officers are, Mrs. S. L. Slocum, president: Mrs. Smith, vice-president; Mrs. E. Nevill, recording secretary: Mrs. E. B. Bell, Corr. Sec.; Mrs. H. W. Coverdale, treasurer, Mrs. Elliott, custodian.

Camp Meeting.—As president of the California Camp-Meeting Association of Spiritualists, it becomes my duty to call the officers and directors of the Association together for the purpose of taking suitable action, with reference to our camp-meeting for the approaching season. I therefore earnestly request that all officers be present at said meeting which will take place in Los Angeles on Monday evening, May 17, in the parlors at 431½ S. Spring street.—S. D. DYE.

Transition.—Born into the angelic sphere from his earth home in Santa Barbara, Cal., on April 19, 1897, Granville W., eldest child of Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Baker, aged five years. He was a remarkably intelligent boy. The funeral service was performed by M. E. Taylor on April 21.

Mr. Baker is president of the Santa Barbara Spiritual Society and Mrs. Baker is a tower of magnetic and sympathetic strength to him in his brave and proficient work for the good of humanity.

Mrs. Maude L. Von Freitag,
SPIRITUAL MEDIUM,
Is now located at Room 325, Hotel St. Nicholas, Corner of Market and Larkin Sts., San Francisco.
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WHEN ANSWERING THIS ADVERTISEMENT, MENTION THIS JOURNAL.

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

A Change in the Program.

TO THE EDITOR:

The Illinois Spiritualist Camp-Meeting for 1897 will begin July 15, and close Sept. 1st, instead of beginning July 1st and closing Aug. 1st as previously announced. The Peoria Fair and Driving Park has been secured by the management for this our first camp-meeting and everything indicates success for the enterprise. This park has a high, close board fence, and contains 160 acres—40 of which being a beautiful grove. There is also an amphitheatre with a seating capacity for 7000 people, with a mile driving track in connection. The management of this camp expects to hold a bicycle tournament five or six days during the season; the prizes awarded to be presented by the merchants of Peoria. The Central City street cars run direct to the Park gate.

The Illinois Psychic Science College will be opened in connection with the camp-meeting with a full staff of competent teachers. Hypnotism, Mesmerism, Magnetism, Mind-Reading, Mental Telegraphy, Mental, Spiritual and Christian Sciences and *Mediumship* in particular will be taught, expanded and demonstrated.

Mrs. S. C. Scovell, of Elgin, Ill., who has her credentials as Minister of Spiritualism from the Illinois State Spiritualists' Association, is now serving the Cause under the auspices of the First Spiritualist Church of Peoria, and will continue her good work as speaker and test medium until the opening of the camp-meeting, at which time she will enter the Illinois Psychic Science College as one of its teachers. She will also appear in the camp work as speaker and test medium.

Full particulars will be given in the "Camp-Meeting Bulletin," which will be sent to any address upon request. Mrs. H. Scovell, Camp Chairman; Rev. Dr. Benton, Camp Secretary, and Mrs. S. C. Scovell, Assistant Secretary, 312 Fayette street, Peoria, Ill.

Anniversary Criticism.

TO THE EDITOR:

I notice the 49th Anniversary of Modern Spiritualism was observed in many places three and four days earlier and in some instances several days later than the 31st of March, which came on Wednesday. That is as much out of order as would be the observance of the 4th of July or Christmas several days earlier or later than the real day. Why is it that Spiritualists have so little regard for their own natal day and substitute another—a counterfeit? We can conjecture a few reasons, and perhaps hit the right one.

Spiritualists are inclined to reverence Sunday (the sacred day of the churches) by resting and donning their best clothes on that day. They do not care to change this custom, and so make their jubilee include Sunday, (a compulsary rest-day in many States), when a larger number may be in attendance. How much is gained to our Cause by taking our natal day out of its proper place to Sunday? None at all.

Many people are so engrossed in the business pursuits of life that they are too selfish to give one day in the week—not even one day in the whole year, unless it be Sunday—for the celebration of our Anniversary.

Let us conform no more to the customs of the past, but—observe our own natal day, come when it may by giving earnest heed to our spirit friends, singing joyful songs and by other exercises appropriate to the occasion. H. N.

Convincing Tests.

TO THE EDITOR:

Spiritualism grows brighter, and brighter, as time moves on. On Sunday evening, April 19, I witnessed one of Prof. Fred Evans' slate-writing seances. The word marvelous is not strong enough to cover the ground, for those unacquainted with the science of catching the spirits' thoughts and recording them in words. For an hour and a half I listened, and viewed with admiration, the highest type of spirit manifestation conceivable to the human mind, not only with interest and profit, but with solemnity. I felt as though my funeral ceremonies had been made, and I was attending the resurrection of the dead, helping to bring them back into mortal life again. It reminded me of the many pleasant hours I have spent with my spirit friends in their sphere where once I recorded my name.

Such science as comes from our spirit friends is a bulwark which our enemies can never tear down. Their crusades and assaults will recoil upon themselves with freezing below zero, for the Messiah has said, "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, in faith believing, it shall be done unto you," and he has said "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh," which seems to be the workings of the present age, and our good brother Evans seems blessed with a broad, humanizing spirit-power, unspeakably full of goodness, which demands constant employment in the line, in which he is so well adapted, and in which he is a decided success, by convincing skeptics of the truth of spirit communion. JOHN BROWN, SR.

San Francisco, Cal.

The Sun of a New Day.

TO THE EDITOR:

The following is an extract from a letter addressed by me to C. C. Davis, of Weare, N. H.:

I thank you for the informal introduction, well knowing that there exists a divine law through which all congenial life-lines are sure to centralize themselves and come together in soul, thought, aspiration, and attraction, soon or later, by the law of evolution.

I like the spirit and tone of your message, and as letters are *mirrors*, I cheerfully reach out my soul's "right hand," and grasp yours, fully realizing that somehow we have been and are close friends in spirit, treading our way in the direction of the realm celestial under the sweet influence of the beautiful light of the glorious philosophy, known as the new dispensation of Spiritualism.

What an ecstatic and joyous feeling of happy satisfaction it produces in the soul of the seeker after light, and searcher for the beautiful and rich brilliants that constitute the jewels of an exalted and masterful life-unfoldment, to come in psychic touch with the ascended loved ones that warmed our hearts and sweetened our lives in days and years now fled!

Thank Heaven for the spiritual philosophy and its establishment among the denizens of earth.

It is the sun of a new day to humanity, and the key that has unlocked the door of the "house not made by hands," and millions of pilgrims on the earth are getting clearer views of the "over there," than the past of humanity were permitted to enjoy.

M. E. TAYLOR.

Summerland, Calif.

Combination of Doctors.

TO THE EDITOR:

For almost 60 years prior to 1894 the practice of medicine was substantially free in Massachusetts and during the last half of that period it was altogether free, while many of the States had oppressive medical laws.

Statistics show that the death rate in Massachusetts was lower after the old medical laws were repealed, and lower than in any State in which such laws existed.

In January, 1896, the American Health Club appointed a committee to prepare a bill to restore medical freedom to the people of Massachusetts, get it introduced into the Legislature, and press it to a passage. The bill read as follows:

"All citizens of Massachusetts, of sound mind, who are not under conviction for crime, shall be, and they are, entitled to the right and privilege to select their own physicians, to employ the same, and compensate them for their services."

It was referred to the Joint Public Health Committee of the House and Senate, where it came up for a hearing Jan. 17. The hearing was continued for three days, during which time speeches were made in the interest of the bill, by Dr. T. A. Bland and Lawyer A. W. Crossley and a number of others.

No person spoke against the bill, although the president and secretary of the Board of Registration, were present. At the close, Senator Hutchinson said to Dr. Harvey: "If you desire to be heard on this bill, now is

the time for you to speak, as this will be the last opportunity." To this invitation Dr. Harvey replied:

"As there have been no arguments presented, I have nothing to reply to. I think the committee understand us, and we understand the committee."

The committee reported against the bill, showing that there did exist a previous understanding, that despite all argument, the bill should be rejected.

We have had our bill introduced into Congress and various State Legislatures, and earnestly ask the cooperation of the press and the people in this herculean task.

T. A. BLAND.
120 W. Concord St., Boston, Mass.

Lecturers in San Jose.

TO THE EDITOR:

A correspondent in the *Thinker* speaks in the most complimentary terms of the lectures of Dr. A. B. Coonley. The compliments are well deserved. Mr. Coonley speaks as the medium of a very advanced intelligence whose life on earth was noble and who is still happy in uplifting humanity. I have heard none who speak more wisely or instructively. It is but just to say that his utterances are much beyond the average of spiritual lectures—not ostentatious, but instructive and religious. If our clergy would listen to such lectures they would be very much enlightened, for they express the truth, not dictatorially or controversially, but in a harmonious and instructive manner. The interest of the lectures are enhanced by the inspirational music.

We have also had in the Union Society several fine lectures from that veteran Spiritualist Dr. D. P. Kayner who is full of instructive thought.

J. RODES BUCHANAN.

From Seattle, Washington.

TO THE EDITOR:

I hope the JOURNAL will grow to be a towering light to guide us out of the darkness into the light.

For many years I have been an ardent advocate of all reforms, and I feel that the spiritual reform is the most essential as a foundation toward all other reforms. Study self, to see ourselves as others see us, and unfold the divine within, when the spiritual nature can predominate, is what we should aspire to.

The cause of Spiritualism is progressing in Seattle. There are four spiritual meetings held every Sunday and all are well attended. The Children's Progressive Lyceum is flourishing under its directors, Dr. Cartidey as leader. The mediums' meeting every Sunday afternoon is quite a feature in the progressive line, and much good comes out of these gatherings.

I hold an independent meeting every Sunday evening with success, and five circles during the week—two public test circles and three developing circles—with good results. Many young mediums are on the way to the spiritual vineyard. I hope all will prove to sow good seed, and the reward will be theirs. MRS. S. J. LEMONT.

A Wrong Impression. — Many persons wrongly imagine that spiritual mediums are "them folks who can call up dead people," and when they hear a medium spoken of, a chill of horror seems to creep over them, as if they imagine they can see the long, skinny fingers of dead people in the every movement of the medium. The truth is, the best mediums are those who hold no communion whatever with the departed, but through their own mentality they bring down light and knowledge from the spheres of wisdom, and by their power of speech they sow the seed of knowledge broadcast o'er the earth, and you and I reap the results. All ministers who preach righteousness are spiritual mediums, whether they are aware of the fact or not. The great motor power of inspiration is attached to their brain, and the forces on the spirit side of life move the machinery which turns out the words.—*Spiritual Advocate.*

A thought wave is desired to be sent to all patriots on April 27, from noon to 1 p. m., and on the 27th of every succeeding month—that wars may cease and freedom prevail everywhere; that suffering millions may be employed and suffering and want known no more.

Two thirds of the population of the globe is under the sway of five monarchs. China governs 400,000,000; Great Britian, 380,000,000; Russia. 115,000,000; France, 70,000,000; Germany, 35,000,000; Turkey, 40,000,000; Japan, 40,000,000; and Spain, 27,000,000.

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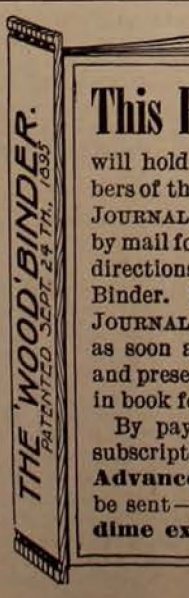
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Suggested by Brother Joseph, as Used at National Avenue, San Diego.

LESSON 15.

QUES.—Is the soul of man a sinner?

ANS.—That will depend entirely upon the one who gives the answer, and the standpoint from which the soul of man is viewed, and the meaning attached to the word sinner.

Q.—Will you please explain yourself?

A.—Certainly. The three parts of the answer shall be considered separately. (1). The one who shall give the answer. (2). All persons believing in what is called orthodox theology. (3). All others who have not given the subject much thought, will, without any hesitancy, declare the soul to be a sinner, but if you answer the question according to the rule laid down by Jesus, you will say, it is impossible for the soul of man to sin, as the word sinner is interpreted by orthodox theology.

Q.—What is that rule of judgment laid down by Jesus of Nazareth?

A.—You will find it in John 7.24. It reads as follows: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (Let the scholars commit this rule to memory).

Q.—We understand "appearance, judgment," to be an opinion or belief formed on the basis of sense testimony. We know that according to appearances it does seem that the individual man does a great many things which he should not do, and the inference is, that he is to blame for doing them, because he knows better and it is assumed that he is able to do better at the time of action. That is certainly the case, is it not?

A.—For many years we thought so, but since we have been led to apply the rule of Jesus, we can see more clearly than ever that *every act* of the individual is the effect of causes or hidden forces in man's nature, and over these causes he has no control at the time of action. He is constantly led by them, and he never knows which way they will lead, or what they will invite him to do.

Q.—Do you mean to say then that if a man commits what is called a horrible crime that he could not help it?

A.—What I mean to say is this: that no effect can be produced without a corresponding cause, and the cause of all action lays in the bosom of nature, and nature rules, whatever we may believe to the contrary.

Truths are first clouds, then rain, then harvests and food. Men are called fools in one age for not knowing what they were called fools for in the age before. We should so live and labor in our time that what came to us as seed, may go to the next generation as blossoms; and that what came to us as blossom, may go to them as fruit. This is what we mean by progress.—Henry Ward Beecher.

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Youthful Days.

O youthful days of love and joy,
They rise to lure my soul away
From vexing cares that oft destroy
The pleasures of each passing day,
And basking in their smile again
The tear-clouds rise and rift apart,
And memory's sweet and tender strain
Sweeps back the shadows of my heart.

I wander back to days of yore
In youthful pleasures sweet and rare,
When life seemed filled with joys in store
And every dream was free from care;
When hidden beauties filled my sight
With splendors on some far-off goal,
As though the star-worlds dropped their light
Through the windows of my soul.

O there are those I fain would see
That met my gaze so fond and true.
They left the earth so silently.
Now moored in heaven's starry blue,
Those eyes serenely mirror still
My youthful days so full of love;
At memory's touch again they thrill
From out the azure heights above.

But I must wait with falling tears,
The slow dissolving shades of Death,
And mark the swift departing years,
The moment's trembling, fleeting breath
For these returning glimpses given,
For dreamy hours of tranquil rest,
My soul is linked with earth and heaven
And with the dear ones God hath blest.

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Psychical Research.—The proceedings of this society are not easily procured, as they are supplied only to members, but we have a few copies which we offer at 50 cents each, the regular price being $1 each. They are dated as follows: "Dec. 1885; April and July 1891; Feb., June, July and Dec., 1892, and June and Dec. 1893 Order at once, as they may be gone.

We will present a copy of Mrs. Underwood's book on Automatic or Spirit Writing (in paper covers), to any one sending a Club of 3 *New* Subscribers for a year, or 6 subscribers for 6 months, with $3 to pay for them, just to pay for the time and trouble of procuring these subscribers. Or we will present this book, bound in cloth for 5 subscribers for one year; or for 10 subscribers for 6 months, with $5 to pay for them.

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And the murmur of pine trees, solemn,
Is the ghostly chant and psalm.
The knotted boles of the hemlocks
Are the pillars along the aisles,
While above, through the lofty arches,
The summer starlight smiles.

The whispering breeze in the branches,
The echo of rippling brooks,
Respond the "yeas" and "amens, Lord,"
In a language not in books.
I here a myriad footsteps,
And rustling robes sweep by,
With a waft, like velvety pinions,
Somewhere 'neath the twilight sky.

* * * *

Closer the echoes come—closer;
O where is my doubting now?
A questioning soft touch greets me,
On palms and eyelids and brow.
It asks: "Do you know me, beloved?
I watch you with tenderest care,
And will raise your storm-stricken spirit
Above the dark waves of despair."

Do I know her?—my faithful darling—
I whisper it soft to the night—
I turn for strength to you always,
As flowers turn to the light—
At this moment I see o'er the tree-tops
A snowy-white cloud drifting by.
"Flag of truce," the spirit said softly;
"I bear it to thee from the sky."

* * * *

Away in the dusky arches
Of the odorous temples, dear,
There's a tone of the sweetest music,
Like a viol's voice, dulcet and clear.
O the strain of that sweet old ballad!
I know, indeed, thou art near,
And while thou art watching and guarding,
What have I to wish or to fear?

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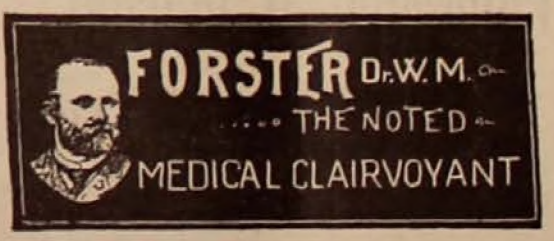
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